On The Road

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This project is (quite obviously) driving themed.

We have a remote controlled car, with a mounted phone sending acceleration data and a video feed to max, through airbeam, syphon, gyrosc.

We decided to explore the way that real sounds of a car and the surrounding environment can make music.

There are several components to this project, and we tried to draw inspiration from different units in MUS314 to implement different sections.

The video components (and of course, use of the car) came from our own ideas and inspiration, and we used Vizzie (a part of Max) to manipulate the video,

The “engine” noise in the the background is synthesized in ChucK, and sent to max over udpsend/receive. The volume can be adjusted manually, but the pitch and vibrato of the sound are determined by the Red and Blue values of the video image, which gives the engine a modulating noise as the car moves, and a standstill drone when the video image is constant. There are also manual ways to manipulate these parameters just for fun.

The backbeat was inspired by Gabriel Shalom’s piece “Felicia”, and uses entirely real car noises sampled from the internet to make a drum beat. Depending on the Green value of the video, as well as what setting the car is in, random other sounds are interspersed as well, all sampled from reality. For example, the city features sirens, honking, etc. whereas the country features birds, and the highway features honking and train whistles. The speed of the backbeat is determined by the way the car is moving (the acceleration and location data coming from gyrosc).

The radio setting contains multiple (car-related) channels that correspond to the setting (some of which, like a real radio, are pretty staticky), all sampled from reality— and like a real car, the radio can be turned on and off.

The dash features two more sampled sounds: the ignition, which starts and stops the car sounds, and the horn. The rest of the sounds on the dash model real car sounds— AC noise, windshield wipers, and a turn signal— but are synthesized in max, and attached to the backbeat.

We hope you enjoy our creative exploration!